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ABSTRACT

These five papers discuss the use of communication delivery systems in developing nations. Four of the papers stress the need for developing nations to adapt delivery systems to their national and cultural interests, to receive training in the management and use of the systems, without undue influence from the developing nations whose technology produced the systems, and to emphasize the content rather than the method of the communication. One paper describes uses of videotape equipment and procedures, emphasizing the adaptability of this medium to developing nations' cultural and political needs. (RL)

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IIC Annual Conference 1977

Group Session III

COMMUNICATION DELIVERY SERVICES
IN DEVELOPING NATIONS

Paper prepared by

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International Institute of Communications Conference, London, England
Washington, D.C.
September 11-15, 1977

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Remarks of Dr. Robert Lindsay, Professor of Mass Communication and International Relations, University of Minnesota, U.S.A., before Group Session III, "Communication Delivery Services in Developing Nations," 1977 Annual Conference, International Institute of Communications, Washington, D.C., Sept. 11-15, 1977.

The peasants of the world are not visibly concerned about "communication delivery services." Their preoccupations are more elemental: food, shelter, another day tomorrow.

And what, precisely, is a "communication delivery service"? I take it the intended reference is to ways of telling people about something.

Eddi Ploman, in his Intermedia leader (August, 1977), is right to question the trendy predilection for facile catch-phrases: "a new international order of information," "the right to communicate," et al., ad nauseam.

Especially troublesome is "development communication". A consensus definition popular in the journals and newsletters informs that development communication connotes the directed use of channels of communication controllable by political directorates to promote and achieve unilaterally programmed development goals.

Development professionals should be wary of this concept.

The requirement -- a matter of utmost urgency -- is for global strategies to accelerate, not "development communication," but communication development.

Unfortunately, we are to the contrary assailed by a cacophony of discrete exhortations about the appropriate role of communication in support of programs for social and economic development.

There is a tendency to sanctify the things of communication: those "communication delivery services".

We are handicapped if not cursed by blind acceptance of the fallacious assumption that the artifacts of communication are compatible with the desiderata of humane intercourse.

Too many bend low in obeisance at the shrine of the god Communication. We indulge unready developing nations in such extravagances as India's overpraised SITE project.

There is an overkill of communications gadgetry; a surfeit of reverence for hardware, when the need manifestly is for software.

By exalting techniques of communication we trivialise the essentiality of social communication.

Yet none of this is to say that mass communication -- primarily a journalistic process -- is not, per se, crucial to the purpose of improving the condition and satisfying the aspirations of the world's peasantry.

It is my conviction that the media of mass communication are demonstrably more important as conveyors of the messages of modernization than any "delivery services" in being or projected.

The mass communication process is not so glamorous or interesting as the study of systemic and procedural elements of development policy and planning. But it is at least as significant.

The fact is that peasants are more attentive to, more attracted by and infinitely more influenced by mass communication than they are by any other mode of communication, saving only interpersonal discourse.

In the Ecuadorean Andes, as I have observed in CIESPAL's incomunicación project, campesinos are "reached" by radio or influenced by travel to nearby villages but only superficially are affected by the "communication delivery services" esteemed by academics anxious for exploitation of their pet theories through the imprimatur of publication.

I submit that our concern of highest priority must be to augment the mass communications capacities of developing States not only through improvement of their telecommunications infrastructures but also by improvement of the professional skills and dedication of the personnel who operate the media.

This is to say that we must undertake to enrich the pedagogical and professional credentials of the teaching

and training staffs of the institutions of the developing countries devoted to production of mass communicators.

Allegations of an "imbalance" in the global flow of information, ideas and mores in large measure are a consequence of the scarcity of adequately educated, competent and professional journalists in the LDCs.

Increasingly since the end of World War II, LDCs have established schools of medicine, social work and other professional areas which now produce degree-holders comparable in terms of their universal acceptance to their opposite numbers in Western countries. With a few notable exceptions, such has not been the case as to journalism and mass communication.

There are, to be sure, several regional centers for the specialized training of mass communicators, established under the auspices of international agencies. Many of these, however, suffer from malign neglect.

There is a measure of merit in the expressions of concern about the inability of some Third World countries effectively to compete with the established news agencies and the mass media of larger or longer-established States.

We must applaud such responses to this challenge as that of the World Press Freedom Committee, which has undertaken to fund and effectuate a worldwide program to assist Third World mass communications enterprises.

The time is at hand, indeed is overdue, for a carefully devised scheme to provide direct assistance in various forms to Third World universities and other institutions devoted to educating and training communications professionals.

Enrichment of their staffs and provision of teaching hardware can, if imaginatively programmed without reference to ideological implications, do much to relieve the LDCs of their present deficiencies with respect to the global communication "imbalance".

I suggest, therefore, that we who are concerned professionally with communication development ought now to shift the focus of our attention from the minutiae of "delivery services" and polemical interpretations of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to the more urgent necessity to foster the self-sufficiency of the Third World as to the education and training of its mass communicators.

The requirement is for a massive, long-range program of assistance, so that developing nations can produce their own journalists, mass communication researchers, media technicians and other highly trained personnel basic to any country's mass communications system in the waning years of the 20th Century.

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Group Session III

COMMUNICATION DELIVERY SERVICES

IN DEVELOPING NATIONS

Paper prepared by

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Washington, D. C.
September, 1977

To discuss the question of communication delivery services in developing countries one has to examine first the kinds of communication media available and the degree of their accessibility to the individual who lives in that part of the world. Although it is not our prime concern in this group to analyse and study the content and design of the message; it is of great importance to draw the attention of scholars and researchers to measure first, the effectiveness of the message and afterwards, the choice of the proper medium to convey it.

The emphasis in this paper will be laid on the electronic media in developing nations for obvious reasons amongst which are the following:

1. The very high rate of illiteracy which makes the printed media of use only to a small portion of the population.
2. The lack of an efficient transportation network to carry printed material across the country to reach the reader rapidly.
3. Limited means for the production of printed communications which encounter many obstacles such as shortages of materials and equipment.
4. Inefficient systems of distribution at local level, as in most of the developing nations.

Therefore, the electronic media will be the core of our study because they are the dominant and available vehicle of communication.

It is also important to mention here that our discussion will centre around the communication delivery services through the mass communication media and will not cover the area of person to person communication. In my opinion the most important concern at this stage is to obtain information on the immediate reaction of the receivers to the message. This, which we may term delayed feedback, indicates which type of communication delivery is the most effective. Consideration of person to person communication delivery services in developing nations (would form part) if required of the study, in a fuller context.

We all know that the electronic media have been established in varying degrees in the developing world. I do not know of a developing nation, that enjoys independence which has no radio service. Television has began to set foot in a great number of nations in the developing world. Satellite earth stations are becoming more and more attractive to Governments and independent institutions, not because of the services they render to people, but because of their contribution to economic viability which pushes them to the top of the priority list of development projects. The presence of the earth stations together with microwave networks, domestic or inter-Regional, means the availability of

telex, telephones, radio and television services in these developing nations. All this leads to recognition of the fact that the developing world has and can have all sorts of electronic communication media services which could be employed for the purpose of delivering messages to its inhabitants.

Most of the developing nations employ radio as the primary medium through which they can reach the population in the shortest possible time. Next to radio comes television which covers in most cases urban areas and is not accessible to certain classes of people for reasons to be examined later in this paper.

The programme formats are no different from the standard ones which contain all sort of programmes such as news, music, talks, interviews, drama, health education, and social programmes, etc. These programmes are locally produced, using the local talent such as announcers, producers, directors or actors. When these programmes are broadcast or telecast they sound and look more convincing and credible to the listeners and viewers. The local programme production does not mean that all elements of the programme are from the country concerned. They can use inserts such as slides, films, music and special effects which are obtained from foreign countries, while using the announcer's voice to explain in the local language what the slide or the picture tells: and can thus still be classified as locally produced programmes.

The percentage of local programmes in the schedule of the average TV station does not exceed 30 to 40%, where as in the case of Radio, the percentage is much higher.

There is a number of factors which contribute to this situation among which are the technical facilities available, the financial cost involved and, more importantly, the programme production personnel.

The developing nations are governed by these factors which determine the extent of the Radio and TV programmes which can be offered to their listeners and viewers.

Radio and TV stations in developing nations could give special attention to health education and social programmes. The frequency and time given to these programmes differ from one country to another, but, in general, they all are placed at the top of their list of important items to be catered for. I have not been able to find comprehensive statistics or references to support my views about communication delivery services in developing countries, particularly in the area of health and social programmes through the electronic media. I have therefore decided to take Sudan as our example of a country which belongs to the category of the developing nations: and I feel that most countries of the Third World resemble Sudan in these respects.

Radio Omdurman is government owned and operated; it broadcasts centrally to the nation through a number of short and medium wave transmitters. It is the only radio station in the country and has three simultaneous services in Arabic and other tribal languages directed to the Southern part of the country.

Radio Omdurman presents the following programmes to listeners of the Sudan in the categories of health and social programming:

Programme Title	Category	Duration	Remarks & Feedback
Your health	Health Education	15 min. wkly.	receives about 2000 letters wkly.
Nutrition	Health Education	15 min. wkly.	1000 letters wkly.
From the Fruits of Religion	Drama	30 min. wkly.	-
The Cooperatives	Social	15 min. twice week	100 letters wkly.
Play of the Week	Drama and Social	30 min. wkly.	80 letters wkly.
	Drama and Social	15 min. wkly.	300 letters wkly.
People and Tunes	Social	60 min. wkly.	-
Youth Magazine	Social	30 min. wkly.	400 letters wkly.
Family Magazine	Social	30 min. wkly.	500 letters wkly.

The total time of these programmes is 8.25 hours out of 126 hours broadcast hours weekly. They represent only 6½% of the total broadcast time, which in my opinion needs to be revised and increased.

Television is somewhat different from radio in the way it presents its programmes to the viewers. It has a nation wide service and regional services in the Gezira and the Nile Provinces. The latter are regarded as rural development programmes aimed at the inhabitants of these two Provinces who are mainly farmers and railway workers respectively.

The Health and Social Programmes on Sudan Television are as follows:

Programme Title	Category	Duration	Remarks & Feedback
Your Life	Health Education	40 min. wkly.	500 letters wkly. from the main station
Your Health	Health Education	30 min. wkly.	400 letters from the Gizera Station which covers three Provinces
Panorama	Social	30 min. wkly.	100 letters wkly.
Social Problems	Social	20 min. wkly.	200 letters wkly.
Family Magazine	Social	45 min. wkly.	300 letters wkly.
Street Talk	Social	30 min. wkly.	-
The Youth	Social	30 min. wkly.	200 letters wkly.

The total time of the Social and Health Education Programmes on television is 3.45 hours out of 42 hours per week. This represents less than 10% of the whole transmission time. It is worth mentioning that, because of the nature of the television viewers, who are mainly middle class residents of towns and cities, feedback is obtained not only through letter as indicated before, but also through other channels such as telephone and regular participation in the programmes.

Let us admit the existance of the electronic media in the developing nations and the use of the media to provide all kinds of programmes which are designed to meet the basic needs of the people. One might ask, what happens at the other end? Is it enough to have the carriers and the signal and to say that you have communication delivery service, without considering whether the target audience has the means to pick up the service and make use of it? To answer this question, it is essential to survey what is available to make the media accessible.

As we have already noted, radio and television are the major mass communication media in developing countries. They have their shortcomings and difficulties, which however it may be not impossible to surmount. If we take each medium alone we can identify some of these problems if not all. Let us start with radio and see what sort of physical problems it faces.

As I said at the beginning, I am not now concerned with the content analysis of the programmes. This, I proposed, should be the concern of the researchers and analysts later.

Most developing nations use both short and medium wave radio transmitters to cover the areas within their boundaries. Sometimes they use micro-wave to link-point the regional medium wave transmitters to the main capital station. In very rare cases they use highly directional short wave transmitters - point to point - to link very remote local stations to the national transmission system located in the capital city. All these methods are employed towards the solution of the reception problems which arise from the vastness of the country, from the inefficient low power transmitter or from the use of unreliable short wave transmitters, which were purchased before their disadvantage for the transmission of domestic services were understood.

Radio receivers, although relatively cheap, are still not as widely spread as UNESCO statistics show. If we adopt the estimate of five radio sets per one hundred persons as the minimum required; we can definitely confirm that the developing nations have inadequate means of information.

Television services are generally confined in many of the developing nations to the capital city and its vicinity, and in some cases major cities and towns. The beneficiaries are thus the inhabitants of the major cities/towns. This could lead to widening the gap between the urban and rural population instead of narrowing it. It could encourage the rural population to migrate to towns, causing environmental inconveniences and to seek this and other privileges the town people enjoy and inconveniences and other social problems. The TV set is very expensive, at a level that the average income family can hardly afford. Even if we consider the concept of the extended family which prevails in the developing world, the situation does not significantly change. TV clubs can help to ease the situation but cannot replace the presence of the private set at home. Repairs, spare parts and maintenance are also very difficult and expensive.

This is the communication delivery service situation as it exists in developing nations. The big question is how to improve it? If we leave the developing nations to achieve improvement themselves, they will not be able to succeed in the near future from their limited resources. Governments might not be able to give priority to communication delivery service facilities unless they are revenue making, such as for example satellite earth stations. The individual will continue for sometime to have an insufficient income to purchase the TV set or radio.

If these facts are ignored, the result will be a wider gap between the developed and developing societies which might become hard to overcome.

We must attract and call attention to the aid and technical assistance provided by the developed countries to the third world and specify funding to be used for the establishment and improvement of communication delivery facilities. I believe that international institutions such as

ours are capable of convincing intergovernmental and international organizations and the industrialized countries to undertake this important human mission which will contribute to the creation of a balanced and enlightened world.

To conclude, it must be re-emphasized that communication delivery services in a developing nation through electronic media are essential to give their population access to the programme messages. We cannot separate the carrier from the target group it reaches, if the purpose is to provide a basic and essential service to the individual. We cannot expect a change in societies to take place with the pace and effectiveness we wish to see happen unless we can communicate with our people.

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COMMUNICATIONS DELIVERY SERVICES

IN DEVELOPING NATIONS

Paper contributed by

KIT NASCIMENTO

Washington, D.C.
September, 1977

"The greatest problem in communication is the illusion that it has been achieved."

When invited to present this paper, I wondered if there was anything useful which could be encapsuled in a statement on a few pages about communication delivery services in developing nations; is there after all a common denominator ascribable to "developing nations" in communication terms?

Certainly, there are a good many aspects about those countries which are variously described as "developing" or "underdeveloped" or "non-industrialised" or "third" or "fourth world," which seem to be common; they are all poor (the non-oil producing nations getting poorer), they all require access to advanced but selectively relevant technology, they all carry increasing debt burdens and shrinking budgets, and most are seeking to emerge from a past of imperialist and/or colonial domination and exploitation.

Translate these similarities into human terms and they spell: high unemployment (Cuba is perhaps an exception), a dearth of managerial and professional skills (further aggravated by a brain-drain), a pervasive sense of psychological inferiority and dependency, a loss of cultural identity, an entrenched indiscipline, unproductive attitudes and rising expectations.

These are nations all of which are "formally" independent, but in the words of the Prime Minister of my own country, Forbes Burnham, spoken ten months before Guyana became independent in 1966: "If we achieve independence we have got to look not only to hauling down one flag and putting up another...not only to having formal control of our economic and international affairs, we must see to it that we achieve more than these - namely, the decolonised attitude of our leaders and of our people."

Dr. Eric Williams, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, in "From Columbus to Castro: The History of the Caribbean 1492-1969," identifies the problem of dependency as "cultural, institutional, intellectual and psychological." Prime Minister Williams argues that "artistic, community and individual values are not for the most part authentic but...possess a high import content, the vehicle of import being the educational system, the mass media, the films, and the tourists."

In a nutshell, developing nations, by definition, need to develop, but any development programme, especially those with an urgent set of priorities, no matter what set of ideals it may be based on, will fail to accomplish its aim unless it has the understanding, support and participation of the masses of the people.

In a developing nation, therefore, probably the most essential ingredient to development progress is the raising of the national consciousness of the people to a point where they can contribute to decisions about development and effectively execute the decisions to which they have contributed.

In real terms, we are talking about the need for an enormous degree of rapid, radical, unexpected and often unpredictable change, and, as Millikan and Blackman - The Emerging Nation, point out: "the paramount requirement of change in any society is that people themselves change."

Governments of almost every developing nation, beset as they are with economic difficulties from imported inflation and wildly fluctuating commodity prices, usually outside of their control, though frequently possessed of economic potential in natural resources still to be realised, preach and attempt to practice philosophies of self-reliance, collective endeavour and egalitarianism.

But, classically, the people harbour attitudes born of a paternalistic colonial past which are psychologically resistant to such concepts; attitudes and behavioural patterns nurtured and developed over centuries to serve and service a former colonial or imperial power. The demands of independence and development, if they are to be met, require a hugely different outlook and approach.

Administrations in developing nations are confronted with the need to restructure, very often, the entire nation: its political, its social, its economic and cultural life. Without effective communication, deliberately planned, organised and directed in a manner and form peculiarly relevant to the existing environment, very little in development terms is likely to be achieved.

But developing nations are faced with two major problems:

1. The marked tendency of political and economic planners, in a huge hurry to get on with the job, to make decisions in isolation from the historical, social, cultural, and psychological constraints which influence behavioural change in people and the fact that they forget that development is about people and for people.
2. The still predominant belief, and still encouraged by what Jeremy Tunstall - The Media are American, describes as "the free-flow of Anglo-American 'experts'," that the mass media, especially the electronic media, is the most effective communications delivery system in support of development progress.

Tunstall points to Wilbur Schramm's "Mass Media and National Development (1964)", which, he says, "immediately became the UNESCO bible" on communications in "Third World Countries."

This concentration on the need for the development of sophisticated mass media delivery systems, promoted through Schramm's book by UNESCO, from 1964 through to the 70s, has led developing nations, as Tunstall documents, into adopting communication services which are almost entirely, both in terms of technology and programmes, dependent upon "Anglo-American imports."

The literature is legion on the communication imperialisms which have resulted and the consequential failure of mass media delivery systems to support development needs and priorities: H.I. Schiller, Luis Beltran, Henry Cassirer, Rita Cru' O'Brien, Mary Burnett, Elihu Katz, to name but a few.

In a scholarly, well-documented paper prepared for presentation at the 10th General Assembly and Scientific Conference of the International Association of Mass Communication and Research, 1976, on the subject of television impact on the minds of Latin Americans, Luis Beltran identifies what he calls the "twelve main images" induced by television delivery systems studied in Latin America, all of them in direct confrontation with development needs and priorities. They are:-

- Individualism
- Elitism
- Racism
- Materialism
- Adventurism
- Conservatism
- Conformism
- Self-defeatism
- Providentialism
- Authoritarianism
- Romanticism
- Aggressiveness

The listing does not imply any order of ranking.

My own country has, to date, steadfastly resisted the temptation of introducing the television technology, mainly because we have feared the problem of the technology being used to "drive" the delivery system, rather than the needs of the system dictating the type of technology and its use. Nevertheless, it is my view

that a series of negative experiences had with television throughout the poor nations of the Afro-Asian-Caribbean-Latin American world is not sufficient reason to reject the medium. Both Everold Hosein's - The Problem of Imported Television Content in the Commonwealth Caribbean and Elihu Katz's Can Authentic Cultures Survive New Media? seem to support this view.

Katz writes that "there is a sameness in the style of television and radio presentations which has come packaged with the technology...wrapped together with instructions for presenting a news programme or variety show...One wonders whether this has to be: Cannot Nigerian or Peruvian or Senegalese television be more indigenous, not just in programming, but in style?" Katz identifies the important difference between "content of specific programmes" and "conception of the role of the media."

Hosein illustrates the whole problem of television systems having been installed initially as glorified telecine chains, unable to produce effective local programmes, the low-cost of imported canned material against the comparatively high cost of locally produced programmes, the shortage of local talent, the insatiable appetite of television, the "I Love Lucy" or "Kojak" audience syndrome, etc. He, however, remains optimistic: "We cannot so easily resign ourselves to the presumed inevitability of extensive dependence on imported television content. With imagination, effort and 'programming will' we can find options which would allow for some increase in the quantity of local productions. We may not achieve the elegance and gloss of Europe or of North America but we would have begun the process of creating our own aesthetic."

A much more positive approach definitely needs to be taken on the value of television as a communication delivery service in developing nations. Surely, countries which so urgently need to mobilise their populations in support of development, cannot simply be advised to ignore the teaching and persuasive power of what Lord Asa Briggs describes as "visual literacy." The fact that language itself finds its meaning ideationally, through pictures in our minds, should be sufficient reason for developing nations to take advantage of a communication technology, universally acknowledged as having the greatest potential for effectively conveying images.

There is no doubt that in almost every developing nation where television has been introduced, it has immediately pandered to the lower order of audience taste, has imported and used great amounts of irrelevant foreign programming and has proved to be much more destructive of national development goals and national cultural integrity than supportive of their fulfillment.

What has almost always been overlooked, however, is that the technology has been the driving force and not the programme objective and the communications concept.

There seems no reason, for instance, why a developing nation should follow the classical television programme format which demands the broadcasting of 'X' hours of television 'Y' days per week.

If there is a clear understanding that development needs must drive the delivery service and not technology, then there is no reason why the system should be driven by what Bert Cowlan calls "the tyranny of the clock."

In her IIC Research Study in 1974, Rita Cruise O'Brien noted that "the unquestioned striving for continuous broadcasting once television has been established makes the reservoir of relatively cheap imported programmes nearly the only source of material."

But classical television approaches, which have led to a surfeit of irrelevant foreign programming, have had to do with the definition of 'quality'. Quality has nearly always been defined in terms of highly sophisticated production and presentation techniques, with the technology forcing upon the programmer a demand for slick production values.

Quality, however, for a developing nation should be defined in terms of "communications effectiveness." Since it has already empirically been established that simple audio-visual techniques are usually more effective for education and instruction than glossy production, developing nations, especially those which have not yet programmed their audiences for North American formats, can define "quality" in terms of their effectiveness in conveying messages in support of development interests.

In so far as imported programme material is concerned, there is not, as far as I am aware, any comprehensive international pool of knowledge which can identify at short notice available programme material. There is need for such information.

I am referring here to programme material which is not solely concerned with instructional education but which can entertain and inform in a manner which would be both culturally and politically acceptable to the ideological and development priorities of most developing nations.

A research exercise into this problem recently conducted in Guyana with the assistance of Bert Cowlan indicates a vast, generally

untapped and individually catalogued amount of non-commercial television films and video material which would not menace national values which tend to be "modular" and "neutral." Some of this material is becoming available from developing nations but again in a disorganised fashion.

Not all Euro-American commercial T.V. programmes are unacceptable and the great advantage television has over cinematic film is that the management of the television station can apply its own standard of selectivity much more effectively than can the usual film censors board.

In any event, given a reasonable range of choice and a defined criteria of ideological and developmental needs, the selectivity and exposure of imported material rests in the host country's hands.

One communication specialist who did not "free flow" out of UNESCO but remained to see and evaluate is Dr. Erskine Childers, today Director of the Information Division of the UNDP. It was Childers, from his experience, when head of the UNDP/UNICEF DSC Service in Bangkok, who devised and pioneered the concept of Development Support Communication.

He advocated a national systems approach to coordination and developing communication delivery services aimed at direct contact with the specific groups of people who are ultimately required to participate in development plan implementation, rather than relying upon mass media publicity to gain support for development plan priorities.

Childers' work came to the attention of the Government of Guyana in September 1974 when it became the subject of discussion at the IBI Meeting in Mexico City. A seminar on Communication & Information for Development Services in the Caribbean under IBI sponsorship further explored the DSC concept in December of that year. One of the seminar's conclusions: "any development strategy must be based on an understanding of and respect for human beings in their total environment."

In essence, how best do we organise communications delivery services to achieve the kind of understanding which would lead to maximum commitment and involvement in the development process by people in their communities.

In his "Introduction to the preliminary proposal for an Iranian Development Support Communication System," Childers acknowledges the usefulness of national all-media publicity "to give the

people a picture of the nation's goals and targets" but argues that "an entire further dimension and programme of planned communication is required beyond planned publicity and role awareness." This he says, "is the work of getting actual groups of human beings throughout the country to undertake specific changes in their life patterns, value-systems, management of natural and social environment, production techniques and family care."

Essentially, development support communication accepts a basic communications truism, that the most reliable and effective delivery service of all is face-to-face contact.

It recognises that for every development project plan which comes off the drawing boards there are two audiences which need to be communicated with: the "internal audience," that is, the planners themselves and all those government or quasi-government agencies working on some phase of the project - all of them people who have other concerns and responsibilities, and, the "external audiences", that is a variety of groups of people whose lives will be intimately affected by the implementation of the project and who often will be required to enter into an entirely new phase of living and livelihood.

Development Support Communication methodology attempts to build a communication element into every development plan project, first at the planning stage and second at the implementation stage. The objective is to integrate a functioning communication network within these two levels, in order to identify, at an early stage, the needs of the planners, deepen the understanding of the groups of people intimately involved in the project and finally mobilise people in support of the project.

To a very large extent the DSC system seeks to decentralise communication delivery services, locating them amongst the people they are intended to serve so that they may be responsive to the needs of specific audiences for specific projects. The production of communication materials are tailored for delivery in small groups at specific community levels and make use of "small" rather than "mass" media.

The use of traditional or folk media, especially in rural communities, fits the DSC approach. In the Caribbean, the Calypso has always been an effective channel for social comment. It can be equally effective for conveying modern development messages, providing it is used sensitively and the artist is allowed to translate and dramatise the message in his own terms.

But, Wimal Dissanayake, in an exclamation of traditional media for the purpose of conveying modern messages in India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Indonesia warns against any simple assumption

that this may be done effectively. He says that "the most judicious course of action would be to make no fundamental changes in the content and structure of traditional media but rather use their forms for the transmission of modern messages."

Guyana has attempted to institutionalise DSC practice in its largest and most ambitious development project, a 3,000 megawatts hydro-electric facility some 300 miles in the heart of virgin jungle and hostile terrain. Over 1,000 workers, functioning in extremely isolated and harsh conditions, are involved plus a large variety of people spanning a considerable number of governmental, trade union, indigenous and religious organisations and agencies.

Practice has already established that conflict, disinterest, personnel problems and administrative bottlenecks have frequently been avoided and usually unravelled because of the DSC elements built into the project. Whereas mass media publicity given to the project has more than once led to confusion amongst those intimately engaged on the project. A complete evaluation of the effectiveness of DSC on this project is presently being undertaken by the project management.

DSC is of course not some magic formula which will guarantee effective communication at all levels of any developing society. It is merely an effort to systemise an approach to public communication and information dissemination so that the development process, hopefully, does not proceed in isolation from the people that it is intended to serve.

It is an approach which is not without serious difficulties judging from a Guyana experience. One of these difficulties is an impatience on the part of political leaderships and project managers to deal with communications problems too quickly, as they arise without always wanting to wait for a full analysis of all the implications which may follow from too hasty a decision.

Another difficulty is that the very introduction of such a system places an additional burden upon an already usually over-extended governmental structure in terms of human resources who have to be trained and equipped with the skills and who have to find time to do the job.

It is not a system which can be introduced and implemented overnight. It takes time, serious application and a good deal of experimentation and amendment.

In developing communication delivery services, many developing nations have, perhaps by force of circumstance, or inheritance, allowed these services to be established in isolation from one another and in isolation from any national communications policy and plan. Given that primary objective in developing communications services and facilities is to enable mobilisation of a country's human resources in support of national goals, it is an imperative that the entire communication/information process be organised and coordinated as part of a total policy as, in the final analysis, each delivery service must be complementary to and supportive of the other.

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Group Session III

COMMON DELIVERY SERVICES IN DEVELOPING NATIONS

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Washington, D.C.

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CONTEMPORARY DILEMMAS IN COMMUNICATIONS

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

Every developing country is bound to look for the most efficient, economic, and best suited communication network for its national purposes and development.

Communication has acquired strategic significance for social and economic progress. It plays an important role as a promoter, accelerator and catalyst of national development.

Technical development does not happen spontaneously. It can, and should, be turned into a controlled and planned process. The greater a country's need for efficient communication, the greater the need for such planning. The importance and dimensions of a delivery system, as well as its structure and basic design, depend on many factors. The main ones undoubtedly are:

- (a) a definition of the social, economical and political goals of a country within its socio-political system;
- (b) a definition of the communication policy, which should be coherent, integral and long-term; and
- (c) a demarcation of the policy of technological development in communication.

I should like to limit my contribution to the latter problem. It seems that a policy of technological development has to take into account at least these aspects:

- (i) a design for the most suitable, efficient and economical technology in the given conditions;
- (ii) an optimum programme for adopting a mix of traditional and domestic resources and in foreign, imported technology;
- (iii) an adoption of policy on the transfer of technology;
- (iv) the required manpower, and training;
- (v) an operational plan and proposed measures for the realization of the defined policy.

Contemporary technology in communication is highly complex and sophisticated. No country, not even a developed one, can develop and amplify its communications isolated from the international achievements of science and technology. This need is even more pronounced in the case of developing countries.

The technological gap between developed and developing countries, well-known for its economic aspects, is perhaps even more apparent in structural matters. The unevenness of technological development has brought about manifest differences

and sometimes extreme polarization between the "haves" and "have-nots," rich and poor, developed and underdeveloped countries. Those countries with generally lower social and economic standards, and a correspondingly less developed communication infrastructure, are forced to import technology. Inevitably they become dependent upon the countries that supply the technology.

Throughout the world there is an enormous volume of knowledge. But it is unevenly distributed. Four-fifths is located in the developed and a few developing countries. They originate 90% of all transfers of international technology.

The international transfer of technology is a fundamental trait of the contemporary world and a basic prerequisite for development and progress in every country, be it developed or developing. It is characterised by some indisputable facts. It is rather easy to transfer technological know-how from one country to another. This transfer is gaining momentum and is increasing at great speed. The international transfer of technology provides developing countries with their main channels and access to the products of science and technology. Developing countries are mainly importing the results of research. Imported know-how is a major factor in the construction of a modern communication network and its further development. There exists a large gap between the industrially highly developed and the developing countries because scientific research and the development of technology is concentrated in the former.

The international transfer of technology is carried out primarily in the market-place, on the basis of trade. Typically, the market is "imperfect;" usually, a monopoly market with a high degree of economic power vested in individual countries. Technology is usually highly complicated and diverse. Yet importers usually do not avail themselves with appropriate information either on the range of equipment or on the advantages of different kinds.

Technological information is treated gingerly; it is often protected by patents. The exporters set the price, which depends to a large extent on the negotiating positions of the seller and the buyer. It is not easy to establish the costs of technology transfer and purchase. Besides the visible elements of the price (e.g., patents, licenses), there are many invisible, hidden elements (e.g., the purchase of equipment, spare-parts, software) and they may add considerably to the costs of technology imports.

There may be other strings attached to the sale of technology, and there are often limiting factors contained in the contracts, all of which add up to major constraints on the importers.

Several UNCTAD studies have revealed the most frequent limitations on technology transfer. They include "package deals" that demand the compulsory purchase of other products alongside the requested one; restrictions on the export of products that are manufactured by means of the purchased technology; restrictions on the freedom to purchase manufacturing components and competitive technologies; demands for guarantees that custom duties and exchange rates will not be changed; restrictions in terms of both foreign and domestic competition; limitations on the development of domestic technical facilities and scientific and research activities; the compulsory sale to the exporter of materials produced by the purchased technology at prices below world levels.

The international technology market has become a huge business. It is dominated by transnational companies that are active all over the world. Their economic strength enables them to exert powerful influences on importers. Sometimes they gain control over them and their activities.

Within this framework it is clear that developing countries are in a far less favourable position than developed countries. The prevailing circumstances in the international market of technology transfer means that the implementation of foreign technology in importing countries, particularly in the developing ones, seldom brings about optimal results. It has been confirmed by many studies that the effect of the transfer of technology depends on many factors like the size and pattern of demand, the level of domestic research and technological capacities and abilities, the ability to select the appropriate technology, the aptitude to adapt new technology to national needs, the capability of the local manpower, etc.

The success of an imported technology depends to a large extent on the way the technology is acquired, adjusted and absorbed.

In their struggle for accelerated social and economical development, developing countries have to resort to foreign technological aid, to imported know-how, to more sophisticated equipment than that they can produce by their own resources. Imported technology, however, is very often not suited to the importing country. Among other things, a transferred technology requires a correspondingly efficient use of manpower and an adequate organisation of the communication process.

Even the most modern technology, when unfittingly transplanted, may be economically ineffective. The costs of implementing imported technology may be far bigger in the developing countries than in the industrially advanced countries.

To extract the greatest possible benefits from imported technology it is not enough to purchase the best available, the most modern technology. It is important to ensure that the technology harmonises with the social, economic, and communication development aims of the importing country. The developing countries need, in this respect, a systematic, comprehensive and long-term policy of technology transfer, and this should be closely connected and coordinated with their own policy of national development. International technology transfer is a basic component of national communication policy.

On the other hand, to rely entirely on the import of foreign know-how may prove to be detrimental to the progress of a developing country and, in the long run, impede development. There is a growing awareness in the developing world itself that, alongside the imports of alien technology, there is an essential need for indigenous endeavours in scientific and technological research.

A realistic portrayal of the long-term future seems to suggest a mix of imported and domestic technology, of modern and traditional ways of communication.

To sum up: the existing gap between technology-rich and technology-poor countries is still widening despite extensive endeavours to promote the international transfer of technology. A series of factors are responsible for that, and they (to quote John Craig from the University of Denver) include:

- increasing economic inequalities and shortages of available capital;
- the growing complexity and cost of modern technology;
- the growing quantity of technological knowledge and the high cost of information systems;
- lack of effective technical-economic infrastructures in many countries -- the pipeline through which technical knowledge flows and is utilized;
- lack of modern technological traditions, value structures and social orientation toward modern technology and its change effects;
- over-optimism regarding the benefits of research in technological development;
- poor planning and managerial capabilities, resulting in the ineffective allocation of human and material resources;
- inappropriate educational policies.

Such a list of unresolved problems might seem pessimistic. Nevertheless, it is an indisputable fact that in the future international technology transfer will continue to be indispensable. No country can really afford an extensive modernization of its communication system without acquiring internationally available know-how. Therefore, it can be anticipated, rightly, that the role and significance of international technology transfer will increase.

But these issues and their difficulties point out very clearly that the future of technology transfer is in the quest for new methods and ways, new relations and solutions. What is claimed in the context of the new international social and economic order requires a new approach in technology transfer. And the new international communication order demands a new approach to the problems of delivery services in the developing part of the world.

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Group Session III

COMMUNICATION DELIVERY SERVICES

IN DEVELOPING NATIONS

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VIDEOTAPE AS A DEVELOPMENT TOOL

1972 to 1976

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Summary

Martha Stuart Communications, Inc. is devoted to producing social change through human exchange. The special medium we use is videotape. During the past dozen years, we have pioneered many ways that videotape production can be used to promote and achieve development goals.

Our videotape work -- both teaching and production -- in several countries under varying conditions has been recognized and praised for its sensitivity, originality, transferability, and overall effectiveness. Of course we have been deeply gratified by this. But we see our successes primarily as products of a philosophy of communications that puts people first. We start by asking what influences people's behavior, how do they become personally involved in the processes of social change, and how can their own capabilities be strengthened by access to new technologies?

Expressed in a condensed form, our objectives are information/choice goals, not authority/control goals. In other words, we try to give people the means to discover themselves, not just present them with an authority figure who will tell them what they should be doing/thinking/feeling. This approach corresponds to that of the growing humanistic educational philosophy which values the interaction between the educator and co-learners above the information to be transmitted.

These principles have infused all of the work we've done, and we believe they are responsible for producing the extraordinary results we have been privileged to witness.

Strategy

Bringing these principles to bear on international development concerns has yielded a field-tested methodology for dealing with such sensitive but crucial issues as population, family planning, birth control, women's roles, sex behavior and associated topics. This strategy also involves its own "multiplication factor," whereby training and equipment can be made available in-country so that the local population can carry on and expand the work we have initiated.

This strategy has evolved gradually over several years and owes far more to the participation and contributions of those people who have worked with us directly and indirectly than we can gracefully acknowledge. We have had both the difficulties and the excitements of being pioneers in areas where our intentions and methods of operation were not always immediately understood. But then, too, we have had the special satisfactions that come from

learning from our own mistakes and finding better ways to explain our work as well as accomplish it.

At present we are confident that the generalizations we can wring from our experience are rich enough, durable enough, and effective enough to afford a valuable model for dealing with development issues in a wide variety of different circumstances. We believe the potential applications for this model are nearly limitless.

Here, then, is a quick survey of the experience which lies behind such a bold claim.

TWO THINGS WERE CLEAR to us from the very beginning:

First, we saw that ordinary people themselves, whatever the culture, offer a subtle but powerful communication potential on issues of social change. By the example of their own discussion, they can

encourage others like them to come to grips with information and attitudes that otherwise might be too threatening to face. And especially if the discussion is open and honest, dealing with personal ambivalences and granting different personal situations and backgrounds, the effect is to legitimate the issue itself. If change is embodied in one's peers, it seems more familiar, more immediate and more understandable than when it is the program of some distant or abstract authority.

A fine example of this phenomenon in action comes from a videotape program we produced in 1972 with Columbian men discussing their vasectomies. One man, attempting to explain, said, "It (vasectomy) is a river whose fishes have vanished, but it continues being a river." The statement served at the time to galvanize understanding on the subject. But we know of no more accurate or affective image to explain in non-technical terms precisely what this threatening medical procedure is all

about. The remark typifies what is possible working within the comforts of people's everyday idiom.

Second, we saw precious little contact between development people and communication people (especially television) in the developing countries. This meant there was very little possibility of meshing objectives: development issues were not finding their way into television programming, and when TV programming, of its own accord, stumbled into development subjects, the treatment was frequently negative (none the less so for not being intentional, in most cases).

Again, to use the example of Columbia in 1971 and 1972, when we arrived there to prepare our programs, no one from Pro Familia (the International Planned Parenthood affiliate that sponsored our project, incidentally the very first of its kind anywhere in the world) had ever been inside the television

broadcast studios in Bogota. Indeed Pro Familia was surprised that the men on our tape were even willing to have what they said about vasectomy actually on the air.

Under the circumstances, it was evident to us that a great necessity and opportunity existed for providing a bridge between the communication media, especially television, and development organizations within developing countries.

BOTH THESE LESSONS from Columbia were confirmed for us in India in 1973.

We were sent to India by the Centre for Economic and Social Information of the United Nations to produce a videotape for use at the 1974 Population Conference. The purpose of the tape was to get behind the rhetoric of the "population problem" to show that population is ultimately the result of innumerable individual decisions.

Without much more than that general outline of the task, we took a small crew to Delhi not quite knowing what we'd find. Once there we put together a program with several couples from what we called the "swing generation." These were people between 35 and 45, almost all of whom worked, and who were children of large families (8 to 18 children) but who had decided to have small families themselves (1 to 4 children). Thus, while they had grown up within a traditional world view, they were now living out a new pattern of life. The couples were of Muslim, Hindu, Protestant, and Roman Catholic faiths.

The program resulting from the discussions among the couples was judged a great success. The participants were perceptive and honest on the subject of what was happening between them as couples, open about their reservations concerning their present lifestyles, and articulate about the processes of change being played out in

their lives. The discussion as a whole reinforced the values of information/choice as contrasted to authority/control by letting viewers see that it was more important to deal with and discuss the issues being raised than to resolve them according to any single, particular, dogmatic "solution". A few representative comments served to give the flavor of the discussion:

- o Mrs. A: "...I think when you plan a family, it's not only you and your husband in the picture -- it's the children to be born -- and that's why both my husband and I very much are against having one child, because then the only thing you have proved (is) you could produce...but don't have anything, no sisters or brothers. And for the same reason, I personally feel, too, that two is too small. In case one dies, or something, then one is left, so maybe three, you know, would be best."
- o Mr. B: "I married later. If I had married earlier, I should imagine six or eight would do all right."
- o Mrs. B: "But you wouldn't have had my co-operation!"

- o Mr. C: "You see, it is a vicious circle. The poor man will never get rich until he reduces his family. But he will never reduce his family until he gets rich. So now we have to find the solution."
- o Mrs. C: "I feel very strongly that in our entire family planning strategy there is no element of compulsion, but there must be, otherwise this country will not survive."
- o Mr. B: "But we have done nothing to give support to education or supportive motivation levels to our womenfolk."
- o Mrs. B: "Parents now -- particularly mothers -- feel that they have more responsibility towards their children and they should only have as many children as they can really look after, give them their time, educate them, train them. But earlier, this consciousness wasn't there. Now, this probably has been brought about by education. See, I come from a family of nine children. I have only three. But I know I am far more concerned about the upbringing, the education, how they should behave, how and what they should eat, about my children than my mother was. To her it was just natural,

every three years she produced a child and we all grew up and the elder ones were on top of the younger ones. It has its advantages and disadvantages. But I do know from my personal experience that my parents did not give so much attention to each child and each child's growth, both mental and physical, as I do."

Yet we discovered that the taping of the program was just the beginning. The chief editor of family planning materials for the Indian government asked us to bring together wives of men who had had vasectomies and to make a tape with them. We did. The UNESCO training center for communication technicians asked us to conduct a video workshop for them. We did. Doctors and interns wanted an opportunity to make a "dummy" tape, so they could discuss among themselves the problems of delivering health care in India. We provided it.

Everywhere we were greeted with requests. People were hungry to discover what we might know, to

learn from our body of expertise. Almost immediately we realized that our opportunities extended well beyond simply making tapes. Here were marvelous teaching situations, created by the eagerness of the prospective students. We discovered a great excitement sharing our knowledge and skills across national boundaries in this fashion.

ON THE BASIS OF the India experience, we began to look upon the creation of a broadcast-quality color videotape as only the tip of the iceberg of the work we could do. The bulk of our opportunity had to do with leaving a trained capability behind us. For example, simply by teaching professionals in other areas -- such as population or health care delivery -- to use videotape as a communication tool, we could create a tremendous "ripple effect". They could follow on to produce many more tapes for

a wide range of uses long after we had departed with our production crew.

When we began the Jamaica Family Planning Project in 1974, under a USAID grant, we were prepared to pursue further the training possibilities inherent in our work. We had two corollary goals for the four-week contract: one, to produce a professional quality videotape on family planning for use as a communication tool throughout the island; two, to provide intensive training to Jamaicans on video technology and its applications at the interface between the health care delivery system and the recipients of health care services.

For the professional videotape program, we brought together 10 Jamaican women from all walks of life. They shared views and experiences about marriage, about their

subordinate positions, and about the instabilities of family life within the overall context of family planning concerns. They talked about the number of children they wanted, childbirth, and the crucial years of a woman's life.

Then, during a one-week period in January 1975, the completed tape was shown to a variety of audiences in many different settings where it was used as a "discussion starter": in the waiting room of a hospital, at an adult education class, in a maternity ward, at a literacy class, in a school, at the offices of the health education bureau, small village gathering places, boys' camp, comprehensive health center, beer factory, to pregnant women, men, boys, teachers, health educators, family planning professionals, the Prime Minister and his family.

According to the evaluation report, the production was "a rare success story much beyond the original expectation."

Meanwhile, however, we were conducting an intensive two-week workshop in video techniques for more than a dozen communication people from such agencies as the Bureau of Health Education, Agricultural Information Service, National Family Planning Board, National Literacy Board, and the Jamaican Family Planning Association.

The Video Workshop provided its participants with a form of apprenticeship training during the professional video production. This involved on-the-job training in the various pre-production and production steps of putting together a professional videotape for the ARE YOU LISTENING series. Two of the workshop participants returned with us to New York for a one-week apprenticeship

in the post-production and final editing of the videotape.

In addition, however, the workshop also provided extensive narrow-tape training for portable video production. This included the making of eight actual field productions, with workshop members rotating as directors, camera operators, and sound engineers. Each tape was then evaluated in the workshop according to its technical quality, production efficiency, and a comparison of pre-production goals with the final product.

Locations for the eight productions were:

Lionel Town Sugar Workers, Kingston Family Planning Clinic, National Literacy Board, Georges Plains Sugar Workers, Jubilee Hospital Clinic, Hope Garden, National Youth Services, and Youth Group at Central Avenue. These various training productions were then exhibited publicly during a one-day Video Festival.

Beyond the actual production experience, the Workshop offered participants a grounding in all aspects of video, from equipment utilization, technical considerations, format choices, lighting problems, on to the possibilities of multi-media events and the special advantages of videotape as a communication tool.

Lastly, during our time in-country, we managed to share a good deal of technical information with Jamaican broadcast professionals. The project required that we ship over 6,000 pounds of color studio equipment to Jamaica, which at that time had no color equipment (this was the first color production in Jamaica). We familiarized the Jamaican Broadcasting Company engineers and crew with our equipment.

(This is an aspect of our work that we take special pride in. In Mexico, following the use of local broadcast studios for our productions of Key Women at International Women's Year and

Journalists at International Women's Year we received official thanks from the Mexican government for leaving the studios in better shape than we found them. Prior to undertaking our production, our crew had repaired cameras and made technical adjustments in the studio equipment.)

In sum, the Jamaica Family Planning Project demonstrated that our video work could go well beyond actual production to a sophisticated -- if brief -- technical training program covering the handling, care, and use of portable video equipment -- and that this training could successfully equip people to make their own tapes for use in a variety of communication situations.

LATER IN 1975, in Egypt, we were again able to give concrete expression to our twin goals of production and training, although this time the training component took a somewhat different form.

The idea for the Village Women in Egypt tape originated at the 1974 Bucharest Population Conference, where it seemed there was a great deal of talk about what "village women" in developing countries would or would not do. Rather than subscribe to the emerging stereotype of these women and their attitudes, we wanted to make a tape with women from some rural, tradition-bound area to see first-hand -- and show others -- the truth of the matter. We decided on Egypt as the setting and undertook an ARE YOU LISTENING videotape production with 10 women from the villages of Tersa, Sandyoun and Matartaress.

The discussion among these women -- wives, mothers, grandmothers -- dealt with their roles, family lives, and traditions. Like the discussion among Jamaican women, this one took place in the overall context of family planning concerns, but opened out into wider subjects as well. The completed tape

showed rural women dealing honestly and openly with their feelings about traditions, the opportunities open to them and to their children, and the force of the changes occurring in their lives.

(Among the negotiations involved in the production was one with the village men of Matartaress, whereby the village women would henceforth be allowed to participate in the communal television viewing, a privilege they had been denied by custom.)

The completed and edited videotape was then screened in the usual wide variety of settings for various kinds of audiences. With much local excitement and fanfare, it was shown in the home villages of the women on the tape, where it generated an enthusiastic response and a strong desire by local men to figure in a tape of their own. As in Jamaica, this program was

one of the first color productions to be broadcast over the Egyptian national television.

Of all the official and quasi-official screenings of the Village Women tape, the most exciting for us was with a group of ministers from the Egyptian government. These men represented the ministries of Health, Education, Social Welfare, Manpower, Agriculture, and Labor, and they were quick to grasp the potential of our work and direct it to their immediate concerns -- nutrition, women's clubs, management, agricultural education, etc. The whole group was refreshingly receptive and supportive, eager not only to find additional uses for the tape we had completed, but to define new production possibilities. They especially liked the idea of people in developing countries speaking for themselves to the people of developed countries. (The Village Women tape has been broadcast not only in Egypt, but in Canada and Australia

and is scheduled to be part of our upcoming series of ARE YOU LISTENING shows on the Public Broadcasting Service in this country.)

Perhaps the single most exciting outcome of our Egyptian production experience, however, was to see how local people could carry on the work we had begun.

As part of the training/teaching dimension of our work, we helped UNESCO locate candidates for their training program in the use of portable video equipment. For this training we nominated Abdelsalem Mahamed Mostafa and Afaf Aly Abel Maksound, a man/woman team of family planning educators in the state of Fayoum. We had spoken with them at some length about the principles of peer-to-peer video production and we were absolutely delighted to return a few months later and see what they had accomplished on their own. With the portable equipment

provided by UNESCO, they had made excellent effective tapes. Among them:

- o A warm stand-up conversation with a family with two children in their bedroom;
- o A gentle interview with a couple with eight children bringing out some of their problems in the couple's own words;
- o A feature with a local woman sitting under a tree making rope out of palm fronds and talking, a tape that could be used to teach the handicraft in other villages;
- o A village meeting with people talking over many different concerns;
- o A feature on a local singer with nationally known entertainers and family planning information interspersed;
- o A teaching tape with weavers, showing a local craft;
- o A literacy play, two men talking about how one didn't get a job because he couldn't read his mail;
- o A production titled, "Life" -- a pastiche of music, markets, and humane concerns like family size made with local people.

We, in turn, taped our viewing of their tapes -- and our conversation -- adding yet another dimension to the communication processes at play there. Some examples of the comments made by Afaf and Abdelsalem on the basis of their experience:

- o "Tape is better than film. It's important to do it more informally, not to have to turn the lights out and have a noisy projector in the back of the room."
- o "It's important for the people to see others like themselves with concerns similar to their own."
- o "With tape we can make whatever we don't have and think we need and try it out."
- o "I can get my friend the doctor to use the tape camera because it's so easy and he can see it right away. Everyone can participate and everyone finds it exciting."*

*FOOTNOTE: Similar results with videotape in a different setting were recently reported by Rajive Jain in an article "Community Video Equipment in Saharapur," in a NIGAH Journal of the Center for the Development of Instructional Technology. Excerpts from the article are attached.

Video Technology

It might be useful at this point to include a quick review of the unique advantages that videotape and video technology afford for the kinds of work we are describing.

At the most practical operational level, portable videotape equipment is simple, easy to maintain and operate, durable, and inexpensive. It is truly "appropriate technology" -- small-scale, manageable, effective, and suited to a wide range of uses.

Portable equipment can be managed by a novice, even by people who are unfamiliar with machines of any sort. With a minimum of training, virtually anyone can become self-sufficient in the use of both camera and recorder/playback units.

The tape itself never has to go to a laboratory for developing. It can be used over and over again. It is a forgiving medium that encourages informality, intimacy, and experimentation.

Even under adverse conditions -- for example, in the dust of the Egyptian desert -- the equipment can be maintained without great difficulty. Cameras can be adjusted to function in a wide range of natural light situations.

It is possible to achieve excellent quality -- even in color -- with low-cost equipment. For example, \$5,000 can buy an excellent black-and-white system including playback equipment; \$10,000 can buy enough equipment for a ministry to share among several family planning clinics; \$20,000 can provide enough color equipment for a country like Tunisia to use throughout its family planning clinic system.

Videotape is also a new kind of literacy tool. It provides a means for sharing ideas and experience

over distance among people who neither read nor write. It puts in their hands a way of extending themselves, of sharing, that has simply never been possible before.

Videotape is highly accessible and manipulable. Because there are no developing processes required, there is immediate access to material that has been recorded. And the access can be repeated at will, going back over material again and again so that people can deal with it at their own rates. This capability has made videotape an important adjunct in such areas as family therapy, role-playing and simulation activities, sports and other skills-training situations.

In fact, videotape can open up new psychological experiences. For example, we seldom see our reactions to other people -- we see their reactions to us all the time, but only rarely vice-versa. Having such sudden distance on ourselves makes us register the nice things about ourselves we might

not otherwise acknowledge. Similarly, it allows us to take in things we don't like -- for instance, about our style of speaking -- at a comfortable rate, and to alter that style without the presence of a critic. In this sense, videotape provides a unique, extremely important, non-judgmental personal learning tool.

So we see that the significance of videotape is greater than its bare recording function might indicate. This is especially true when it comes to the social action arena. Videotape provides a means for people to share a visualization of something directly. No intermediary experts, brokers, interpreters are required. The viewer has direct access to a meeting, a family decision-making session, a maternity-ward discussion -- an event of whatever sort -- without any intervening subjectivities filtering the experience for him, the way a newspaper reporter, teacher, TV newsmen, or messenger would do. As a viewer, you

can see what's actually happening, confront it, deal with it, integrate it for yourself. In short, you can trust it and act on it in a way you couldn't if you were dealing with someone else's pronouncements about what is happening.

Thus there can be enormous leverage for change exerted by a few ordinary people making a record, with videotape, of something as simple and as straightforward as a mutual discussion of their attitudes about a stressful subject. Their peers will have their own thinking/feeling reactions stimulated by exposure to the tape. The issues are thereby brought within their ken, and they can more easily hear things they might normally be afraid of, such as information concerning new methods of farming, new concepts about family planning, or new attitudes toward cooperation between men and women.

A surprising amount of information can be communicated when it is offered in this non-directive manner.

The net effect of such processes can be to create in audiences a lively sense of excitement about the possibilities of human exchange and social change -- that is, if they feel culturally and psychologically a part of what is happening on the videotape they are watching. This kind of video experience can then result in a person gaining new perspective about life's options, a fuller sense of himself, and possibly a new sense of mastery over his own life.

Recommendation

We strongly recommend, on the basis of the experiences summarized here, that any communication strategy at building understanding about development issues utilize what we call a "full spectrum video" approach -- that is, combine professional production and non-professional training in such a manner as to take full advantage of the special qualities inherent in videotape.

Professional production will create a high-quality, color videotape television show suitable for broadcast use in the country of origin and elsewhere. This tape can also be made widely available on videocassette for such non-broadcast uses as village meetings, seminars, small group discussions, classrooms, workshops, national and international conferences, teaching, and so on. In this form, the tape will be especially useful to development workers and change agents concerned with building

understanding on specific issues. The tape will be of demonstrable benefit to policy planners, who can use it to gain a closer understanding of the needs and attitudes of their various constituencies. It can also be used for scholarly purposes, a source of qualitative, attitudinal data. Additionally, the actual process of production and broadcast will create contact and sharing between local development specialists and local communication specialists, and these bridges will remain long after the specific tape is completed. Finally, the opportunity to share expertise with local broadcast engineers and crews can help to up-date in-country video and broadcast performance.

Falling at the other end of the spectrum are the training of non-professionals and the supplying of narrow-tape portable videotape equipment for them to use on an on-going basis. This can be carried out on either a modest or grand scale --

in either event the training is short and the equipment relatively inexpensive. Bear in mind that narrow-tape video has always been designed not for hobbyists but for professionals in fields other than video. This training, then, provides such professionals with access to a powerful, practical, effective, appropriately-scaled communication tool. The training leaves an in-country capability that is then available to extend the original work of the professional production but in smaller scale; to bring this communication process to bear on new subjects or issues; to apply the technology in new areas, such as sharing information or skills among villages; or to develop imaginative new applications. The so-called "ripple effect" can be enormous. And it will act to stimulate social change in the most healthful, stable manner possible -- by promoting individual growth, widening personal horizons, providing access to more information and more choices in an open, non-directive manner.

We sincerely believe that this two-pronged strategy offers the best possible way of meeting serious communication needs quickly, creatively, effectively, appropriately. Further, we feel this strategy makes it possible to combine effective communication and education with a true respect for people and their abilities to grow and change. In this sense, the strategy represents a statement of values as well as a programmatic model. Indeed, we honestly think this is why the strategy has proved so successful for us in the past.

Finally, we value more than we can express the friendship and mutual regard we share with people in many corners of the world who have helped in our work, who have been part of it, who have used it, and who have carried it on in their own ways.

EXCERPTS from Community Video Experiment in
Saharanpur by Rajive Jain

(NIGAH Journal of the Centre
for the Development of In-
structional Technology, New
Delhi, India)

We have been working for some time in a Western Uttar Pradesh village studying the communication process. Our funding has been to design a media strategy for family planning communication and to evaluate the impact of agricultural films, but our activities have covered a much wider area. Our presumption has been that film was a very effective way of transferring knowledge and generating change in a largely non-literate environment. Our experiences have not borne this out. (emphasis added)

The nature of the film medium is such that it breeds passivity in the viewer. He sees images of other times and places but seldom relates them to his own condition. A shot of a starving child during the Bihar famine would not evoke sympathy but laughter...

On our first trip with the video equipment we selected an open space under a tree and set up our Video Tape Recorder and monitor. We taped the people who gathered around and played back simultaneously.

This was a major event. Even sophisticated urbanites seem to be quite happy watching themselves endlessly. For our villages it was almost magical. And it saved us from explanations. The medium was demystified...It is quite a sight to see six hundred people watching a nine inch monitor. We also had a few...shows for small groups, like women who would not come out from purdah. We discovered that locally produced programmes were among the most popular.

We allowed the community to dictate the content of the programmes. A few of the villagers soon began to make their own tapes...One discussion spontaneously turned to family planning. It was felt that planning one's family was a good thing in itself, and that this was the widely accepted view...However, services were felt to be totally inadequate

and unreliable...The whole administrative approach of catching people by any means and 'sterilizing' was responsible for the failure of the programme...

Our role was gradually narrowing down to store-keeper and underemployed technical consultants. The equipment took care of itself. No precautions were taken. It was constantly exposed to dust, heat, and backbreaking bicycle rides. The monitor was run on a 12 volt car battery...

One thing definitely has been established. Video does seem to be very effective in crystalizing issues and opening communication channels within the community and between the community and the outside world.



RANDOM THOUGHTS ABOUT TELEVISION AND OUR SOCIETY

By Martha Stuart



The average person in the United States, if he continued to watch television at his present rate, will have by the time he is 65 watched nine years of 24-hour days.

Television is the distributor and video tape the medium - the former reaching more people instantly and the latter recording more impulses instantly than any previous technology known to man. Television is not what is on but how what is on is transmitted.

What is wrong with education today also is wrong with educational television, only the latter is tuning out larger numbers of people than any college or university. What's wrong with commercialism today is also wrong with commercial television only the latter is more personally destructive to more people. Both are saying to people, "You are out of it." The problems seem too big and complicated to do anything about and the pleasures too glamorous to be a part of. So, people keep contact with the outside world by watching even more television and thus living even more vicariously.

We forget that the antitheses of anger, polarization, ugliness and war are things that we create actively. They are not just the absence of tension nor the war against the war-mongers, but the making of beauty, the making of understanding, the sharing of differing views. We make life as well as death.

We see very little that is artistic on television because no painter will paint a painting that might have a hole cut out of it, and no group ever composed a symphony. There is virtually no machinery for independent creation on television, very few video tape festivals, no experiments in programming on view at the conventions; very few young rebels in the industry; very few productions from other countries.

We desert people when they start to do their most important job in terms of their input into society. Education and growth would never stop if people got a taste of understanding about mothering and fathering from good mothers and good fathers. It's essential that they see



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people like themselves arriving at conclusions that will make their families more democratic or their towns more liveable.

We need to make the adult classroom an open classroom. We need to revise the adult primer - television - so that we see and hear people with whom we can share experiences - people in the real world, not Dick and Jane.

When I started as the first Radio and Television Consultant for Planned Parenthood, the words "birth control" had never been used on the air. We changed everything - public opinion, government irresponsibility, religious ambiguity, personal fear, medical reticence - about birth control by getting on the air with a whole spectrum of views in every discipline and with women talking about what it meant to them to use it. Now, the issue is how best to do it, not whether to do it. We changed it into a matter of civil rights or personal choice in four years.

Television is an extension of the language. It should make it possible for people to choose candidates on the basis of feelings about them as people rather than on the basis of indiscernible issues. For example, the issue is how to implement the black movement rather than whether to do it.

Television makes it possible to underline the common bonds of human concern so that the differences of age, sex, color, religion, nationality or whatever can be enjoyed, not feared. But it has never been used this way before, and we can't expect those in control to think human affairs will sell or that they should risk their jobs or reputations on it. They will take a chance only if someone else takes the responsibility.

People respond to reinforcement. Why not reinforce understanding as much as we reinforce violence?

People see poor communication constantly. Why not show them good communication?

We are moving from a world of authority and control to one of information and choice. We need to use television as a medium for sharing information and reinforcing choice.



MARTHA STUART COMMUNICATIONS

Note: This is the same article in English, Spanish,
French and German.